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# Food and Home Notes

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Commercially stuffed frozen poultry is prepared under special conditions — that cannot be duplicated in the home.

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Did you know that poultry that has been frozen in the raw state can be cooked — and then frozen again? Freeze as quickly as possible after cooking.

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Add broth or gravy to your casserole dish because it lengthens storage life by preventing contact with air. Contact with air causes a rancid off-flavor to develop.

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Baked products made without eggs may be more crumbly than the same product made with eggs according to home economists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Don't try to omit eggs from a chiffon cake recipe — because they are necessary as a leavening agent.

## USDA RESEARCH

### — ON COPPER IN HUMAN DIETS

If your diet is low in copper it may intensify your risk of coronary heart disease, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture Medical Officer, Dr. Leslie M. Klevay of the Agricultural Research Service.

What foods have a copper content? Generally, foods with high amounts of fat...nuts, for example, are high in fat and copper. Beef liver, which contains a moderate amount of fat, is high in copper. In a study at the ARS Human Nutrition Laboratory, Grand Forks, N. Dakota, Dr. Klevay found that diets with less than two milligrams of copper (the amount considered desirable for adults by the National Research Council) are not uncommon in the United States.

Dr. Klevay compared the copper content of 47 foods purchased in 1942 with the copper content of the same kinds of food purchased in 1966, and found that two-thirds of the items purchased in 1966 contained less copper. This study, along with others, raises the unsettling possibility that many people may now be consuming less than optimal dietary copper — and possibly increasing the risk of heart disease. More research is being conducted in this area.



# food then and now



## THEN AND NOW "IN" THE STORE... INFORMATION

Consumer approval is necessary for products to sell. When you buy an item, it's like casting a vote in favor of the product, according to Dr. Evelyn Johnson of USDA's Extension Service. If you are tempted to purchase an item that wouldn't fulfill your needs, don't buy it! If you do, you are leaving an empty spot on the shelf that is often interpreted as consumer acceptance of the product.

Shopping in the "good old days" was geared to availability of goods and did not offer any great degree of selectivity. Today shopping is a myriad of opportunities -- more than 10,000 items are available. But -- the same rule of thumb remains... consumer acceptance or rejection runs the marketplace.

Today, in contrast to yesteryear -- we have almost unlimited information on what we are buying. But, unless we use it -- it's worthless. Do you keep the available "tools" in mind when you shop? 1) Unit pricing...do you know what it can do for you, and do you use it? 2) Open dating...do you understand what the dates mean on the products you buy? 3) Labels...do you actually read the labels and know what you're looking for? 4) Services...what is provided by the store where you shop? Do you take advantage of the "specials" that are offered? 5) Brochures...How often do you look around and see if there are new pamphlets or point of sale information that might prove useful to help you shop? Dr. Johnson points out that in order to choose food alternatives wisely you must figure the cost difference when you shop. It can actually "pay" you to be a discriminating consumer.

"What will you pay for convenience foods? Are you willing to make trade-offs? It often makes good sense to pay for "convenience" but, sometimes, it doesn't. Don't hustle to the store with your eye set for quick meals or instant shopping, because you'll lose. You could lose time, money, energy, and your chance to provide good nutrition for your family.

"Food prices rose fairly modestly during the 60's but by 1971 were nearly 30 percent above 1960. One way to combat food price increases is to learn the rules of buying," suggests Dr. Johnson.

"Don't just read the labels. Learn from them. A label that begins with water, sugar, orange juice includes just what the label claims...more water than anything else because it is listed first. Gravy, beef, and carrots means that there's more gravy than there is meat. It's easy to check this on the label...learn...and then plan accordingly," she says.



# THEN AND NOW THE STORE... INFORMATION



It's not a good shopping practice and it's not a bargain to buy more food than you need just because it is "on sale." That approach accomplishes nothing; over buying encourages waste unless you have plans for storing it, preserving it, or eating it. Consider alternatives when quantity shopping appears to be a bargain -- remember that storage costs money too, warns the nutritionist.

During the course of a week each adult normally consumes a great deal of food -- much more than you might assume. According to USDA's Agricultural Research Service, one well-fed adult, might weekly use 3-1/2 quarts of milk, 5 lbs. of meat, poultry or fish, 4 eggs, 4 oz. dried legumes and/or nuts, 10 lbs. of fruit and vegetables, 3 to 5 pounds of grain products -- plus, fats, oils, sugar, sweets, coffee, tea and seasonings. For a family of four it might amount to more than a ton and a half a year.

When you shop, Dr. Johnson says, your food buying decisions are actually an investment in your family's future -- what you feed them today is your nutritional investment in their health security for tomorrow. The butcher behind the meat block was helpful in the old days with his wealth of information, but in today's marketplace you have other aids from which to draw: Items which are high priced today may be among the lower priced ones tomorrow because prices fluctuate. Weather influences the availability of food items and the marketing processes, distribution and consumer demand all tend to change the marketing picture daily. You need to use current food information -- wisely -- every time you shop.

## TO THE PRESS — BECAUSE YOU ASKED

What's happening in Hometown, USA — outside your own backyard? Information that would be useful to your readers — ideas that they could expand on and use in your community. You'll find all this — and more — in the new "Story box" — it's here to share ideas from the Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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GO METRIC? Give them a centimeter simply, and they'll take to meters quickly, advises a Virginia Tech Extension specialist who has been helping Extension agents throughout the state 'think metric' for more than two years. For best results...with adults...whether homemakers or farmers, she recommends "hands-on" demonstrations. Want to know more? Call Gaynelle Hogan, Extension Specialist, Consumer Health, Virginia Tech, Blackburg, Virginia 24061 (703-951-5815). Photos available to media. Also, free single copies of "Think Metric", publication 612, may be obtained by writing the Distribution Officer, Extension Division Publications, Hutcheson Hall, Virginia Tech, Blackburg, Virginia 24061.

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